

Meeting Notes

14 November 2007

Location: BLM Office, 915 Walla Walla Ave., Wenatchee
For more info contact: Casey Baldwin 509-664-3148
baldwcmb@dfw.wa.gov

RTT Members in Attendance: Casey Baldwin, Dennis Carlson, Steve Hays, Tom Kahler (9:00-10:00), Tracy Hillman, John Arterburn, Bob Rose, Kate Terrell, Joe Kelly, Cameron Thomas, Chuck Peven, Michelle McClure (via phone)

Others in Attendance: Julie Morgan, Derek Van Marter

Executive session (9-12)

1) Workplan / topics that need resolution and direction. (9-12)

Casey opened up with introductory comments on the purpose of the Executive Session. Namely, the focus will be on developing a work plan for the RTT over the next year. There was some discussion regarding the evolving role of the RTT, and the expectations surrounding that evolving role. After some discussion, it was decided that most of the items on the agenda were within the purview of the RTT and were consistent with our mission statement, official procedures, past practices, and future expectations. One possible exception was agenda item (e), which was “tabled” and will be picked up again at a later meeting.

a. Project review outside the SRFB process.

At the previous RTT meeting there was concern that the RTT review and input of products/projects (outside the SRFB and CSF process) has not been as effective as it needs to be to meet the needs of the UC Region or the RTT. There was some concern over RTT workload and why the current process (SRFB) was not adequate for development of projects. Several members provided examples of requests for review for Products or processes that are outside the realm of the SRFB / Trib Fund process. Additional comments were made supporting the need to provide input to project sponsors before the official review starts, which will lead to better proposals and better projects. Casey stated that the RTT would need to control the number and timing of the reviews so that the workload was manageable. Kate suggested that the additional reviews could be conducted quarterly and that if workload was too much that a subcommittee could be formed. Casey suggested that the reviews should only take place between October and April, outside the SRFB review time, and that they occur as part of the regularly scheduled RTT meetings so little additional time commitment is needed. The group expressed a desire to adhere to the official procedures in order to be more effective, consistent, and fair to those seeking input from the RTT. Casey pointed out that the RTT

procedures needed updating in order to meet the current expectations the RTT has for the process. The group reviewed Attachment A of the Operating Procedures and offered more detail for the requests for review. The group provided specific input on what a request should include that Casey and Derek will work into a revised version of Attachment A. The revised version will be circulated to the RTT for review and comment, and completed at the December RTT meeting.

b. Methow Monitoring Coordination.

Casey distributed the agenda for the Nov 29 meeting for coordination of monitoring in the Methow and asked Julie to describe the ongoing efforts. Kate pointed out that the RTT had always intended to be involved in coordinating monitoring in the Methow once the other subbasins were up and going. The RTT agreed that the Monitoring and Data Management Subcommittee should be involved in reviewing the information and products that result from this effort, so that the products and plans are consistent with other basins in the Upper Columbia. Participation may be constrained by workload and lack of funding. Casey will ask all new members if they also want to be involved in the RTT Monitoring and Data Management Subcommittee.

c. Wenatchee Habitat Subcommittee Potential Requests for Review.

Casey described the recent Wenatchee Habitat Subcommittee meeting with regards to the USBR presentation on their analysis of the Nason Creek watershed. Casey mentioned that he was contacted by several members of the Habitat Subcommittee expressing interest with having the RTT help them on two tasks.

- Determining the biological-benefit portion of the prioritization framework for the Nason Creek implementation plan.
- Determining in which watershed should USBR do their next assessment: Peshastin or Icicle?

Casey will work with the Wenatchee Habitat Subcommittee to develop a formal request of the RTT for helping in reviewing the biological benefits of the prioritization framework. The RTT will see a presentation from the USBR at the December meeting, and discuss the RTT's role in assisting the USBR team in further developing the prioritization framework. After the presentation and with the prioritization framework and request for review in hand the RTT will determine if and how they can help.

Regarding where USBR should work next, the group agreed that, from a biological perspective, the spatial structure requirements for achieving Viable Salmonid Populations in the Recovery Plan would favor working in Peshastin Creek.

- d. TAG for Columbia River Initiative (Julie)
Julie explained that the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the Columbia River Initiative was a group that was making decisions that would affect the implementation of water quantity projects in the Upper Columbia. She pointed out that the TAG did not include any members from the Upper Columbia Region that have been involved with the Recovery Plan, Implementation Schedule, or other Salmon Recovery related processes. Julie mentioned that Commissioner Hunt was concerned with that void and wanted it looked into further. Julie asked the RTT if and how they want to engage with the Columbia River Technical Advisory Group in Ecology's efforts on the water storage grant process. The group agreed that it would be beneficial to have coordination between the upper Columbia and the TAG, and that Steve Hays was an appropriate person to work with Julie on getting more information and a better understanding. Steve agreed to work with Julie on the issue.
- e. What topics does the Region need technical guidance on? Do we want to be proactive rather than reactive? I.e. draft barrier prioritization
 - o Nutrient Enrichment?
 - o Integration of H's (habitat capacity vs. hatchery production)?
 - o Other?

This agenda item was discussed, but tabled until a later date due to limited time to complete the discussion, uncertainties with workload, and uncertainties with consistency with the RTT operating procedures.

- f. USBR presentation in December.

Casey suggested that the December meeting should allow for the USBR to present / interact with the RTT from 10-3 and that it should include both Nason Creek and the Methow. The group agreed and Casey will work out the details with the USBR.

Open session 13:00-15:00

RTT Members in Attendance: Casey Baldwin, Dennis Carlson, Tracy Hillman, John Arterburn, Bob Rose, Kate Terrell, Joe Kelly, Cameron Thomas, Steve Hays, Chuck Peven, Tom Kahler (14:30-15:00), and Michelle McClure (via phone)

Others in Attendance: Derek Van Marter, James White, Pamela Nelle

2) Revised Biological Strategy (13:00-14:00)

Casey reviewed with the RTT, revisions to the biological benefit score sheet. A subgroup worked on revisions in response to a concern from the UCSRB regarding multiple-listed-species bias in the current scoring criteria. After a discussion of potential further revisions, the group agreed with the revisions as proposed.

The group also discussed the possibility of asking for a summary paragraph of a project proposal based on a template drafted by Casey. This template was very brief but included the essential information for everyone on the RTT to evaluate the project under the same assumptions regarding the objectives, quantities, and limiting factors addressed, the watershed category and major / minor spawning area designations, and the species and life stages affected. Tracy and Tom offered to present the template to the Tributary Committee for consideration as a requirement in Tributary Fund proposals. Casey offered to work with Derek to see about including it in the regional process so that it could also be incorporated in SRFB-only proposals. Casey cautioned that even if project sponsors were required to complete the summary paragraph a subset of the RTT might need to double check it for accuracy before the whole RTT rated projects.

3) Monitoring subcommittee update (John Arterburn)

- No work was completed on the ESU-level prioritization of all data gaps, information needs, research priorities.
- OBMEP update: John Arterburn provided a summary of OBMEP activities, recent reports, and an overview of the OBMEP website.
- Next meeting, timing and agenda topics.
 - The group agreed to have the next subcommittee meeting on Nov 30, starting with the following agenda items:
 - Methow monitoring coordination- update on the Nov 29 meeting and discuss how the subcommittee will engage
 - Workplan guidance for James White
 - Overall coordination across the ESU
 - Research and monitoring prioritization across the ESU
 - Review of the management questions in the Adaptive Management Narrative

Meeting notes by Derek Van Marter and Casey Baldwin. Approved 28 November 2007.